

Mr. Sh-----n's

12

153

A P O L O G Y

TO THE

T O W N;

WITH THE

REASONS which unfortu-
nately induced him to his
late Misconduct.

Written by HIMSELF.

And publish'd by his very good Friend
H-----y S-----r.

D U B L I N:

Printed in the Year 2754.



M

A

I an
Tru
and
cine
in h
Fav

A
will
sust
and
cing
right
sion

rage
Info
Play
right
to p
at A

grea
an I
grea
noth
selv

gant
enor
plau
for t
Mea

at e
Maz
not
noth
past
tion

Mr. *Sh***n*'s Apology, &c.

AS APOLOGIES have been so often repeated, that the Town begins to look on them as so many lame Excuses for Indiscretions one is unwilling to own, I am now determin'd to publish one that shall be actual Truth, without any Regard to Self-Justification whatever; and which shall contain no other Defence of my late Sauciness than what shall result from the Publick's Weakness, in having conferr'd on me so many great and unmerited Favours.

And first, that I am a Creature of your own making, will be no difficult Matter to prove, since what could have sustain'd me, amidst the numberless Impertinencies, Broils, and Confusions I have been engag'd in since my commencing Manager, but that partial Love of the Public, which, right or wrong, would have me preside over their Diversions; and by supporting me when I least deserv'd Encouragement, pave the Way for still greater and more daring Insolencies. I was flatter'd by you that I was a great Player, had Talents fit to discern what was proper in the right Management of a Play-house, and Courage sufficient to put them in Execution. You compar'd me to *Roscins* at *Rome*, for good acting, and to *Shakespear* at home for great and sublime Abilities. What wonder then if I assum'd an Haughtiness of Carriage suitable to the Dignity of these great Characters? Do you think you made me great for nothing? or that I had not a Right to despise even yourselves, puff'd up as I was with the Wind of such extravagant and unmerited Praises. I should have been humble enough in my own Opinion, had not your ill-tim'd Applauses help'd to inflame me. Who then are ye to blame for this Arrogance? You first extoll'd my Merits above Measure, and I, to shew how improveable a Talent I had at every Thing, was vainglorious; went on so far in this Maze of Conceit, that even you yourselves at last began not able to bear me. For my Part, in all this I think I am nothing to blame: and such little Shame do I take at my past Conduct, that I assure you, was you beyond Expectation to continue your Favour to me still, I would not one
Jot

Not alter in my Behaviour, but be the same insolent, the same irrefragable and conceited Coxcomb to the End of the Chapter.-----So much for Indulgence : now for something else.----You find fault with me that I curtail Plays, and will not have Speeches *enrich'd* you seem to take Delight in : Who the Devil are you, that you should controul me in the Management of my Concerns. Am not I as free to act in my Play-house as any of you are in yours ? Where is then my Injustice if I should refuse you ? So servile a Compliance with what you unreasonably ask, and shew that I was more oblig'd to you for your Company, than you to me for Playing, which is a Notion I would have by no Means propagated. I am both by Birth and Inclination a Gentleman, and if I now and then condescend to act for you, I think I do you more Honour than my Duty compels me to, and all the rest ought to be left to my own Disposal.

But some of you will object, and say, 'tis our Money supports you there, that you are the Publick's Servant, and you ought to shew yourself more complying to those whose Favour you live by. Fine Reasoning indeed ! as if the Delight given by my magnificent and choice Representations, did not more than over-balance the Pleasure conceiv'd by the collecting their dirty Money. Who bids them come if they have not an Inclination ? Is not the Market fair between us ? If I have their Money, have they not my Play ? where is then the Obligation ? I am not only Lord of my own House, but every Thing that passes there, even to the Spectators Judgments : to manage Play-houses of late is not only become the Director's Province, but to manage Audiences also ; and he who dares to dispute this Prerogative will make, I am afraid, but a *Money-Bill* Affair of it, that is to be turn'd out of his *Place* ; for by my Connection with these Powers who are at Variance with those who call themselves Friends to their Country, I am able at any Time, to have a Posse of Soldiers, or Constables, to overawe any who shall dare but to whisper they are of the same Opinion with the Patriots aforementioned.----Tremble then, O ye Sons of Liberty and Turbulence, I will make you swallow such Stuff as I please to cram down your Throats, or you shall be represented as Enemies to good Government, and his M----y's mild Administration.-----What ! do we not live in a free Government ?---What is then freer than for every Man to do as

he

he pleases?----Did I serve you right, I should invite you every Night to my Theatre, promise you one Play, and give you another; and if you did not like it, turn you out of the House for daring to mutiny, and stop every Penny of your Money for such insolent, tho' provok'd Behaviour. You think, perhaps, that we Players are the same Scoundrels we were formerly! No, no, your own Indulgence of late has taught us to think much higher of ourselves; we are no more that tame passive Race, that will suffer raw young Gentlemen to lord it over us, and subject us to such Concessions as the meanest of Slaves would not fail to kick at. We are now Company for the best Lords in the Land; who prefer our Conversation before that of the greatest Wits or Proficients in any one Science whatever. We have Access to great Men's Chambers, when other honest Artists are forced to wait in their Halls. All Topicks of Conversation turn upon us only. We are allow'd to excel even in Merit the Poets whose Verses we rehearse and live by. In short, we are the only Set of Men, now-a-days, worth admiring. And he who dare dispute this Position, will be as little qualified for polite Company, as if he shou'd assert the Author of *Pamela* or *Grandison* was not a fine Writer, myself the best Actor the Stage ever produc'd, or *Hall Br--ke* the Glory of the Age he now lives in; which to affirm (in my humble Opinion) would be little less than Prophanation.

But Gentlemen! why quarrel?----is not your Usage as reasonably bad as cou'd possibly be expected from one whom you always knew was above stooping to please you? What good Actors have I shock'd your Imaginations with these many Seasons past? Are not they a Parcel of as mean Performers as Ill-taste could love to disport itself withall? Who of them, except myself, scarce know the Grounds of their Mother-Tongue; and have no more Judgment in Elocution than so many *Welsh* Baristers. Have not I behav'd myself like a true King, who ever jealous of any Rival to his Dignity, the Minute I saw the least Spark of Merit beam forth from the Action of any one of them, that Moment I sent him a packing? *Woffington*, 'tis true, I retain'd, but she, you know, is a Woman, and except her attempting *Wildair* or *Lothario*, cou'd rival me in nothing. Yet begad such was my Apprehension of her too great Capacity to please, that I had often Notions of discharging her. And shou'd, perhaps ere now, have done it,
did

Did not my great Reliance on your natural Inconstancy, which is soon tir'd of what is good, give me Hopes that you wou'd one Day or another save me that Trouble, and discharge her for me. And indeed, so many Obligations have I to you for Favours of this Kind, that it wou'd be Ingratitude in me, not here to express them. You banish'd for my Sake *Cibber*, tho' the Fault in that Quarrel was evidently my own, help'd me with your Tongues to bespatter *Barry*, and when I discharg'd *Dyer* and *Mossop*, whose rising Merits, I was sincerely afraid of, not a Man of you started up to say ill I did; but acquiesc'd in the Tyranny with as much seeming Pleasure and Indifference, as if you hop'd to go Sharers with me in the great Safety, and Interest I propos'd to myself in cashiering them. 'Tis this partial Regard of yours for ev'ry Thing that affects my Welfare, that has enabled me to withstand so many Storms of private, and popular Resentment, which my own Folly, Impertinence, or Indiscretion at sundry Times have drawn upon me. And I am not still without my Hopes that though my Impudence in this late Affray, has been the most glaring imaginable, that your usual good Nature will intercede in my Behalf, and reconcile it to your Minds though contrary to all Reason and Demonstration, that I am still innocent. So shall you save yourselves the Trouble of being pester'd with any farther Apologies. And I, who, God knows, am almost at my Wits end what Excuse to make, will be reliev'd from the excessive Fatigue of feigning one. Such a Proposal redounding to the Emolument of both Parties, ought, I think, at first hearing, to be comply'd with. But if you are resolv'd to go out of your usual Course of judging, and condemn me to Ruin for no other Reason than that my unparrall'd Impudence has deserv'd it, I assure you, I will be as far from asking Pardon, as you may be from gratifying it; and will insist on it, notwithstanding, whatever Menaces you may offer, that I was in the Right of what I did, and that you are the poor tame passive Poltroons my Conduct endeavour'd to prove you.

○ This, by the Way, is but Spite, for though I vapour thus, and make a Boast of my Magnanimity, I assure you, I feel my Heart ake for fear you shou'd take me at my Word, and not force on me that Forgiveness which tho' I am too proud to ask; wou'd be more cherishing to my Vitals than a Dram; not that I value your Favour, consider'd

sider'd merely as such a Rush; but am afraid, if this Inveteracy against me holds, I who have been so great a Stage-Monarch, must be oblig'd to abdicate, and seek Protection in the Court of some foreign Play-house Prince; who, perhaps, actuated with the same Spirit of Pride and Insolence, will not fail to Lord it as severely over me, as I did over others whose hard Fortune subjected them to my Tyranny. This may seem a just Retribution of my former ill Usage, but will by no Means agree either with my Temper or Constitution.

O People of *Dublin*! if you drive me from among you, whither shall I fly to? Your Tastes I have so long study'd and got the better of, that I despair of ever meeting the like again, shou'd I travel the whole World over. What Spot on the Globe where Plays are consider'd less and Players more than in *Ireland*? Will my Puppet-show Tricks please in any Part of *Europe* so well? Where can I get a College at my Beck, ready at all Emergencies, right or wrong, to stand by me, and vindicate my Fopperies, at the Hazard of their Lives and Reputation? Will the Ladies of any other other Country fight for my Cause with so much Acrimony as did the fair ones of this? So great was their extreme Love, that all Reason was put out of the Question, and the less I deserv'd, the more I found myself growing into Favour. When other Countrymen who had real Merit, were forc'd to travel for it, and seek Encouragement abroad, for those superior Talents, which was injuriously deny'd them at home, me you retain'd and cherish'd, and tho' the least deserving of your Bounties, heap'd them so copiously on me, that I found my Income became to be equal to a Lords, and so liv'd accordingly. 'Tis true, I promis'd in Return for all this, that I wou'd become your most faithful, obsequious, and everlasting Servant; that I wou'd make your Delight my whole Study; and that I wou'd raise your Stage to a higher Pitch than ever it was in these Nations; and elevate it so far as to vie with the renown'd ones of *Rome* and *Athens*. But here, O *Irish*! I humbugg'd you damnably.----For to tell you a Truth, which is now no longer an Advantage to me to conceal, I knew not one Title of all that I talk'd to you about. The Plays and Customs of the *Athenians* were all Greek to me; for tho' I had a College Education, and may be presum'd from that Circumstance to know something of the Matter, I spent my Time there as most
Youth

Youth do, in frequenting Play-houses, getting acquainted with Actors, and mixing in their Riots, and if ever I read, which was very seldom, 'twas generally some fustian Play, from the Repetition of whose turgid and unnatural Speeches I catch'd as much Rant, as perswaded many, my Genius lay Stageward; and the less to answer their sage Remonstrances, than my own most violent Inclinations, I commenc'd Actor accordingly, and had not long appear'd on the Stage till I became your Favourite and Darling. That I do not continue so still, is not so much that your Tastes are improv'd, as that in your Follies you are changeable.—Farewell then—since you are tir'd of me. I will shew my Resentment by leaving you.—I'll for *England*, where Learning is much in the same State as here. Where if I be so happy as to meet with a favourable Reception, I will fall into my old Tract of Extravagance; drink Wine of a Guinea a Quart, and treat my Friends with the same Magnificence as usual; and if over my Cups, it ever happens I have Occasion to talk of you and your Tastes, I will so bedivel you and them, that the *Bæotians* who were once the Scoff of the rest of *Greece* for their Stupidity, shall appear Wits to you. One more Farewell, and believe me to be (what I never yet was)

Your most humble Servant,

T——s SH———



P. S. I thought I had done, but a human Consideration rising in my Breast, I come back to say a Word or two more to you. As I leave behind me a Number of unhappy Creatures, who are likely to suffer severely by our late Quarrel, and who, now they have lost their Head, will be more liable to be reputed Vagabonds than ever, 'tis humbly submitted to the Consideration of the truly Tender-hearted, if some Employment might not be got for them at some of the public Works, such as the Bridge, &c. and though it may be objected from their ill Construction of Plays, that they wou'd make but bad Builders, yet I will venture to aver from my own Knowledge, that in no Part of the World can be found more excellent Pumpers.